

REMARKS

I. Amendments

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that each single-piece of the claimed electrical depilator has at least one arm, each of the arms having a clipping surface and a supporting portion at a surface of the arm opposite to the clipping surface. The amended claim also recites that a clipping gap is formed between opposite surfaces of the arms of two single-pieces.

Support for the amendment to claim 1 is provided by Figures 4-8 and 12-14. For example, Figs. 6 and 7 illustrate a single-piece having three arms.

Applicant has cancelled claim 4 without prejudice.

Upon entry of this paper, claims 1-3, 5, and 6 remain pending. No new matter has been added by any amendment herein.

II. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by US 5,976,157 to Yiu ("Yiu"). The Examiner alleges that Yiu discloses each of the features of the invention as claimed. Applicant disagrees.

Anticipation requires that each and every feature of the claimed invention be disclosed in a single prior art document. Applicant submits that Yiu does not disclose the pending amended claims 1-3, 5, and 6.

Amended claim 1 recites that each single-piece has at least one arm, and that each of the arms has (a) a clipping surface and (b) a supporting portion provided at a surface of the arm opposite to the clipping surface. The whole set of single-pieces is arranged in such a manner that the clipping surfaces are directly opposite to each other, and a clipping gap is formed between the arms of opposite surfaces of two single-pieces.

Applicant describes the following differences between the pending claim 1 and Yiu by referring to Figs. 4, 9 of the present invention and Figs. 2, 3, 5 of Yiu.

Generally, in an electrical depilator having an arcuate shaft (as illustrated by Fig. 2 of Yiu), the electrical depilator comprises at least one of pair of clipping surfaces for depilating

hairs and at least one of pair of support members for imparting clamping force on the clipping surfaces.

(1) In Yiu, as shown in Figs. 3 and 5, a pair of outer discs 212 is mounted on an internal disc assembly 301 which is different from the outer discs 212. Therefore, one depilating unit of Yiu is composed of three complementary members, i.e. two outer discs 212 and one internal disc assembly 301.

In contrast to Yiu, the pending claims recite that the clipping surfaces of the single-pieces are directly facing each other, and there are no additional elements interposed between the single-pieces. As shown in Figs. 4 and 9, the clipping surfaces 51 of two single-pieces are directly facing each other, and the clipping gap is formed between them so as to depilate hairs. Consequently, one depilating unit of the pending claim 1 is composed of only two single-pieces, rather than the three elements disclosed by Yiu. Therefore, the electrical depilator of claim 1 has a simpler structure than that disclosed by Yiu.

(2) In Yiu, as shown in Fig. 3, two peripheral portions 402 of the pair of outer discs 212 are pressed against one peripheral portion 502 of the internal disc assembly 301, which is structurally different from any of the two outer discs 212, to form two traps for depilating hair. The combination of two outer discs and one inner disc to form a depilating unit is required since only one internal disc and one outer disc cannot form a depilating unit.

In the pending claim 1, the clipping surfaces of two single-pieces are directly facing each other, and there is no third member between the two single-pieces. As previously stated, all the single-pieces have the same structure, thereby obviating the need for a manufacturer to stock different kinds of discs (as disclosed and required by Yiu).

(3) In Yiu, as exemplified in Fig. 3, the pinchers 306, which are in correspondence with the support portion 52 of the pending claim 1, extend axially from the U-shaped members 305 of the internal disc assembly. Yiu's flattened peripheral portions 402 and 502, which are in correspondence with the clipping surfaces 51 of the amended claim 1, are provided on the outer disc 212 and the internal disc assembly 301, respectively. That is, the pinchers 306 and the flattened peripheral portions 402 are provided on the internal disc assembly 301 and the outer disc 212, respectively. The pinchers 306 and the flattened peripheral portions 502 are provided on the same internal disc assembly 301, however, the pinchers 306 and the flattened peripheral portions 502 are radially spaced away, and are not opposite to each other.

In Applicant's pending claim 1, as shown in Figs. 4-6, each single-piece has a clipping surface 51 and a support portion 52 provided at a surface of the same single-piece opposite to the clipping surface. In the assembled depilator, the support portion 52 of one of the pair of single-pieces is opposite to that of one of other pair of single-piece to impart a clamping force on the clipping surface of the single-pieces. Accordingly, the clipping surface 51 and the support portion 52 are formed on the same arm of the single-piece and are opposite to each other.

(4) As shown in Fig. 3 of Yiu, the support portion (as identified by the Examiner in the reproduced Figure located on page 3 of the Office Action) of the internal disc assembly 301 functions to support or mount the insert disc 501. However, this support portion cannot impart a clamping force on the clipping surface of the peripheral portion 502 of the outer discs 212.

Therefore, the support portion shown in Yiu's Fig. 3 is not in correspondence with the support portion 52 of the pending claim 1.

Consequently, Yiu does not disclose the limitations "each single-piece having at least one arm, each of the arms having a clipping surface and a supporting portion provided at a surface of the arm opposite to the clipping surface, the whole set of single-pieces being arranged in such a manner that the clipping surfaces are directly opposite to each other, a clipping gap being formed between opposite surfaces of the arms of two single-pieces" as defined in the pending claim 1.

Applicant submits that each and every feature of the pending claims, as discussed above, is not disclosed by Yiu. Furthermore, Applicant submits that the pending claims are not an obvious variant of Yiu.

Consequently, the structure of the claimed electrical epilator is not anticipated by Yiu, and the rejection under §102(b) is improper and should be withdrawn.

Applicant submits that the pending claims are in condition for allowance, which action is urgently requested. Authorization is hereby given to charge any fee in connection with this communication to Deposit Account No. 23-1703.

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